

I'VE WAITED MY WHOLE LIFE



Eight years ago, I sat alone with my grandfather, just days before he died. I was worried he wasn't eating, and I told him that if he didn't eat anything he'd end up back in the hospital, and he said "that's not where I am going".

He knew he was at the end of his life. I wondered what the right words were, in that moment, and eventually I replied, "well, you're not going anywhere today, but, when it is your time, it is kind of exciting to think that you'll see Jesus, isn't it?"

My tired grandfather relaxed his face and I saw him close his eyes and smile. His whole demeanor changed, his face softened, his voice was peaceful and steady and he emphatically and longingly said this; "Absolutely...I have waited my whole life, to see the Lord". It was almost as if he wasn't even talking to me in that moment, it was just the simple utterance of his heart, sighing...

That right there, was the most evangelical moment of my life. This is the moment where I saw my grandfather as he was - a man who loved God and had truly waited his whole life to meet his Saviour. A man with blessed assurance. As I watched peace overcome him, I knew he had something I did not have. I saw something that day, that changed me. Not because he had said anything profound, not because he was trying to create a moment or give me last words of advice, but because it was real. I could tangibly see his belief, and that... was something remarkable. What I saw, planted a seed.

This moment has lived and wandered in my mind, ever since he went home to be with the Lord. His funeral service became a pivotal moment and each prayer that he had prayed, with regards to me - all the seeds he had planted over the years on my behalf, met me head on. This is when I encountered a crisis of faith that caused me to ask myself, "Do I believe what I say I believe?" and set me on a pursuit of understanding that made God real to me. This is where I encountered Jesus, the Jesus that I had always believed in, but I don't think I truly knew. It's not that I had lived a God-less life, but God was not the center. I went to church, but my heart was complacent. At the foot of my grandfather's casket was where I started my long journey back to God. This is when the God I inherited from my Christian family, became mine, for real.

My grandfather had lots to say to me about living a Christian life while I was growing up, but to be honest, I did not see that for what it was. I thought I was a disappointment to him. I thought he was more concerned with whether I went to church, than who I was. I wanted my grandfather to know me...he wanted me to know Jesus. Those two realities clashed. It wasn't until he was gone that I realized how deep his love was, that he was more concerned about my salvation than anything else. I believe that day, with my grandfather preparing to leave the world, God reached out and honoured my grandfather's faithfulness to Him, by placing Grandpa Lloyd, right in the heart of my story, weaving him into a moment of awakening.

After he died, my aunt gave me his testimony, written about 20 years prior. What a blessing it was to have his thoughts, in ink on paper, in front of me, decades later. As I read his words, there was nothing too eloquent or profound, it was just my Grandpa, simply expressing his love for Jesus and the blessings he'd been given. But through his story, the word that kept recurring, the word that stood out to me, was REVIVAL. My grandfather had experienced revival and was praying for it in the church. He was sowing these seeds of revival for decades.

Henry Blackaby notes in his study, "Experiencing God" that "the way you live your life is a testimony of what you believe about God." I would offer that the way you leave this life, is also a testimony of your belief. At the end, my grandfather was still looking forward. He had no doubts, he knew where he was going.

How I longed for what he had. Peace... Assurance...Belief.

Before I left my Grandpa that day, he asked me to play him some music. He wanted to hear the "Eastern Gate". More than a few times in his last months, he had asked me to play this particular song for him. It was long into my journey, that I realized the prophesy in his choice.

"I will meet you in the morning, just inside the Eastern Gate"

The Eastern Gate is a reference to heaven. My grandfather spoke that over me from his death bed; "I'll meet you there"; like his final prayer for me...the final seeds.

Today, I lead a ministry called "Revive" inspired by my grandfather's testimony. The last sentence of the book of Mark says this: "and they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word with signs following." We can't always see God's plan. We can't always see the end, when we are at the beginning, but if we believe in His Word, we need to step out in faith and "live the life that is a testimony of what we BELIEVE about God". Sometimes we won't see the all the signs that follow from our faithful obedience to living for God, but rest assured that though we might not be here to see the results, God is using it all. My grandfather never knew the power of that moment, or that God had entered into it. He didn't get to see the results on this side of heaven, but I like to imagine when he saw his Saviour, Jesus said, "good and faithful servant, your harvest has yet to come... wait and see what I am about to do!"

The seeds we plant today, live on long after we leave this earth, and if we believe in His promises, "we know that all things work together for the good of those that love God, and are called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28, - which by the way, was the verse my Grandfather quoted in his testimony.

Today, let's ask ourselves what we truly believe, and then - let's go plant some seeds.

